

State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster

Budget Communications Memo



Library Initiatives

Background — BadgerLink (www.BadgerLink.net)

In operation by the Department of Public Instruction since 1998, BadgerLink provides on-line access to information resources for Wisconsin residents in cooperation with the state's public, school, academic, and special libraries. Through statewide contracts, BadgerLink provides access to more than 700 newspapers and more than 11,000 magazines, photographs, maps, book reviews, and reference materials. Extensively used, BadgerLink patrons conduct more than 8 million searches yearly.

Other benefits of BadgerLink include:

- specialized resources like the African-American Bibliographic Database provide information to minority pupils. Information in Spanish can extend learning to the Hispanic community;
- professional education information, including tools such as Page Composer which allow teachers to find information for pupils and to set up web pages with links to those resources;
- resources targeted to children such as Searchasaurus, which provides information for primary school children and EBSCO host which has images that can be used with younger children;
- full-text reading material that can be accessed from home, school or library, encouraging students to learn how to do research and find materials independently;
- statewide contracts that equalize educational opportunity across the state for all school districts, particularly small and/or rural districts that may otherwise not be able to afford these services.

Budget Request

State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster requests an additional \$49,000 SEG in FY06 and \$87,000 SEG in FY07 to maintain the current level of services through BadgerLink. The state superintendent also requests \$545,000 SEG annually in FY06 and FY07 for the addition of one or more encyclopedias in BadgerLink for users of all ages and/or materials to assist pupils in completing classroom assignments.

Costs to continue the BadgerLink contract are projected to increase over the 2005-07 biennium based on five-year prices submitted during the 2003 bid process.

FISCAL SUMMARY		
	2005-06 Request	2006-07 Request
Requested Funding	\$2,537,500	\$2,575,500
Less Base	\$1,943,500	\$1,943,500
Requested Change	\$594,000	\$632,000

Background — Public Library System Aid

Over the past 30 years, Wisconsin's 17 public library systems have developed strong programs of service to their member libraries, including resource sharing and open access for all state residents. Participation in public library systems is voluntary, and the public library system aid program is the primary state mechanism to support public library services in Wisconsin.

Fulfilling the Promise

The present level of funding jeopardizes the current status of full participation by all libraries in the state. Public library system aid, which is to be set at 13 percent of local and county expenditures in the previous year, will decrease to an estimated 7.3 percent in FY07.

Budget Request

The state superintendent requests an increase of \$10,055,200 GPR in FY06 and \$11,025,300 GPR in FY07 to fund public library system aid at a 13 percent index level, which is required under s. 43.24 (6), Wis. Stats. (The total request from all sources is \$24,251,900 for FY05-06 and \$25,222,000 for FY06-07.) In FY03, the index of state aid to local and county aid for public library service fell to 8.6 percent and is estimated to have fallen further (approximately 8.2 percent) in FY04. This is the lowest state index level of funding in the past 20 years.

Continued inadequate state funding threatens a program of library access, resource sharing, and improvement that the state has worked to develop since 1972. Continued cuts to public library system aid mean the state's residents will have lower quality public library services and less access to the knowledge and information resources that they need to meet their personal, professional, and educational goals.

FISCAL SUMMARY — GPR		
	2005-06 Request	2006-07 Request
Requested Aid	\$22,140,000	\$23,110,100
Less Base	\$12,084,800	\$12,084,800
Requested Change	\$10,055,200	\$11,025,300

Background — Library Delivery Services

The DPI manages statewide interlibrary loan operations, which encourages libraries to borrow and lend items not held in each library's collection. The department has worked with the South Central Library System (SCLS) to provide statewide delivery services to interconnect systems. A committee appointed in 1998 to advise the department concerning the operation and cost of a delivery system recommended that:

- all public library system connections be made five days a week,
- the service be paid for from a separate state appropriation and not charged back to the systems, and
- the current van delivery system was more cost effective than postal or commercial delivery services because of staff time and costs needed to package and individually address each item being sent by commercial delivery services.

For a delivery service to be effective, a large number of libraries throughout the state must be willing to participate. SCLS has successfully connected public library system offices, academic and other types of libraries to provide the statewide service. Currently, public library systems pay a fee that is based on the system aid amounts received by each system. Private academic and other libraries pay a per stop cost. Additionally, the department allocates federal Library Services Technology Act (LSTA) funding toward delivery service costs.

In the state superintendent's 2003-05 biennial budget request, the department identified service delivery costs in its 13 percent index level funding request for library system aid, indicating that delivery costs would be paid out of system level aid increases. Neither the service delivery costs, nor the 13 percent index level of aid was included in the governor's 2003-05 budget request.

If fees are raised to cover the entire cost of the service, some libraries and systems may no longer be able to participate, resulting in reduced access to library materials for Wisconsin residents. Total delivery volume was estimated at 702,000 items in 2003 and 757,432 in 2004.

Budget Request

The state superintendent requests \$329,600 GPR in FY06 and \$349,300 GPR in FY07, to cover the costs incurred by public library systems for system-to-system delivery. SCLS has successfully connected public library system offices, academic and other types of libraries to provide a statewide service, but the amount of delivery services is expected to grow substantially as more libraries automate and patrons initiate more requests.

FISCAL SUMMARY	
2005-06 Request	2006-07 Request
\$329,600	\$349,300

Background — Library Service Contracts

This request is to continue four library contracts to supplement services provided by the Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning. These contracts are maintained in accordance with s. 43.03 (7), Wis. Stats., which requires the state superintendent of public instruction to contract for services with libraries and other resource providers in and outside of this state to serve as resources of specialized library materials and information not available in public libraries or the Reference and Loan Library. The four providers the department contracts with are the

- Milwaukee Public Library (MPL),
- Wisconsin Library Services (WiLS),
- Wisconsin Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (WRLBPH), and
- Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC).

WiLS and MPL lend materials to all parts of the state in response to requests forwarded by the Reference and Loan Library or public library systems. The contracts with WiLS and MPL ensure access to the major collections and unique materials held by these libraries for patrons statewide. Funds are used to pay for staff to locate, ship and shelve materials and for supplies and postage.

Under s. 43.03 (6), Wis. Stats., the state superintendent is required to contract annually with a public library for the provision of library services to physically handicapped persons, including those who are blind. Since 1961, this contract has been maintained with the WRLBPH located in the MPL, which provides its space without charge. The WRLBPH provides specialized services to certified blind and physically handicapped persons throughout the state. The Library of Congress provides the recorded and Braille materials (estimated at an annual value of \$376,700), but the state is obligated to provide for processing, maintenance, and circulation.

The CCBC is a repository of children's trade books used by children's librarians and teachers throughout the state. It provides unique resources and services to educators and other citizens, especially on freedom of information issues. The contract provides partial funding for staff and center operations.

These contracts ensure that pupils and other individuals have equal access to informational materials required to do coursework, meet curriculum needs, or pursue personal interests regardless of where they live or their special needs or circumstances. However, because of the 15 percent reduction for the 2003-05 budget, the department was not able to maintain all its contracts from the prior biennium. In particular, the interlibrary loan contracts with WiLS and MPL were cut substantially. This has meant that materials were not accessible from the University of Wisconsin and private academic libraries outside of Madison, and that there was not sufficient funding to fulfill all requests that could have gone to UW-Madison.

Budget Request

The state superintendent requests an increase of \$154,800 GPR annually in FY06 and FY07 to bring funding for library service contracts back to the FY03 level.

FISCAL SUMMARY		
	2005-06 Request	2006-07 Request
Requested Aid	\$1,031,700	\$1,031,700
Less Base	\$876,900	\$876,900
Requested Change	\$154,800	\$154,800